



**Wellers Accounting
Practice Reduces
Downtime by 85%**





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Ercan Demiralay,
Partner, Wellers.

Wellers, an accounting practice based in London and Oxfordshire with 80+ employees, decided to switch to a Microsoft Azure environment in 2021, knowing that their existing Citrix environment was inefficient and unsustainable. The firm's IT company, although skilled in Citrix, proved wanting when it came to Microsoft Azure; one year on, major performance problems had not been resolved. In 2022, they engaged Ziptech Services, a Microsoft Service Provider, to audit their Azure infrastructure, then reconfigure it and manage the firm's IT. Since then, Wellers has reduced the downtime recorded on staff timesheets by 85%, increasing chargeable time and productivity.

Citrix vs Microsoft Azure for Wellers

For Wellers, the Citrix infrastructure was not robust or resilient enough. Partner, Ercan Demiralay, reports, "We had expensive servers and kit in the office that needed replacing every year. Citrix wasn't a sustainable solution. We discovered it wasn't very secure either and we knew it was time for a change. Sticking with Citrix would have left us exposed to more and more vulnerability."

With a keen interest in technology, Ercan leads the accounting practice's IT strategy. He believed Azure would be a better solution for the firm. He adds, "We wanted the flexibility, scalability and resilience of Azure."

Signs of a Poor Microsoft Implementation

The plan was to instruct their IT service company to carry out the migration to Azure and implement Microsoft 365. Ercan aimed to "adopt 365, integrate telephony and enjoy all the benefits of a true cloud environment". However, things didn't go smoothly; the telephony didn't work as planned, and the IT provider had to find workarounds. All of this proved particularly cumbersome during lockdown. Wellers decided it was time for a second opinion and appointed Ziptech to investigate.

Redesigning Azure

Ziptech did a full assessment of the Azure implementation, performance, usage and cost. The report found failings in the implementation and management of Azure that were causing poor performance and incurring monthly costs that could be easily reduced.

Reducing Complexity

When analysing Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) Session Host/ Virtual Machine usage, Ziptech noticed that Wellers' applications needed more memory than processing power. Moving Wellers to a Virtual Machine (VM) model with a better RAM to CPU ratio, increasing the VM size and upgrading to a more suitable storage option meant that Wellers could scale down from 51 to just 12 session hosts. This move reduced costs and increased performance. Ercan explains:



Our IT provider had implemented over 50 session hosts – a ratio of one server to two staff – yet the performance was still poor. Ziptech reduced the number of hosts but increased the power of each which meant a major performance improvement and lower monthly costs.



Streamlining Management and Maintenance

Moreover, some workstations were not being centrally managed; Ziptech improved security and streamlined controls by joining all devices to Azure Active Directory and moving them to Microsoft's Intune central management, which is part of Azure.





Controlling Costs

Ziptech also introduced proactive measures to reduce ongoing running costs; Azure fees are incurred monthly depending on usage, so it pays to make sure you 'switch off' virtual machines when not in use, for example, at evenings and weekends. Ziptech uses automation to shut down AVD Session Hosts at an agreed time in the evening and start them up again in the morning, as Wellers' staff begin their day.

A Better Work-Life Balance for Staff

Ziptech also enabled the ability to start an AVD Session Host upon connection, even if shut down; if someone needs to work in the middle of the night or in a different time zone, they can do so. It also supports Wellers staff policy which allows employees to work from any location in the world for two weeks every year, in addition to their regular hybrid working environment.

Security at a Lower Cost

Ziptech also noticed that a market leading EDR security product, which was installed onto each AVD Session Host, was using excessive resources on each Virtual Machine. They replaced this with Microsoft's own EDR solution. Being designed for use with AVD, it was not only more lightweight than the original anti-malware EDR product but was also significantly less expensive.



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Summary of Business Advantages for Wellers

Productivity: Proactive IT management has significantly improved performance for Wellers. For a firm that bills time, technology outages or applications that run slow are a problem. Ercan explains, **"We charge clients based on the time we spend working for them. Since switching to Ziptech, we have reduced downtime on our timesheets by 85%."**

Security: With Azure Virtual Desktop, Microsoft takes care of securing Wellers' data stored in the Azure datacentres. Ercan explains the added security measures that are now in place to increase security at device and user level, **"MFA [Multi-Factor Authentication] is there, security on laptops with Windows Defender is covered, and the Ziptech team is currently provisioning Intune and all the remote device management tools that come with Azure. Disaster recovery is easy too; we just go to backup. Every six months we check the speed; we can recover back to the same morning very quickly."** He adds, **"We feel more secure than ever before, and we are working with Ziptech to complete Cyber Essentials to improve our security further."**

Service: Describing what Wellers' experience was like before Ziptech and after, Ercan concludes, **"As soon as we made Ziptech's changes, staff noticed the increased speed of the system at once. The response time to tickets went from hours to minutes. The engineers were friendly and supportive. Most of all, Ziptech understands Azure; they know how to implement it well and they understand the problems we report. What were we doing before? How did we cope?"**

Get in touch

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